

BACKGROUND PAPER

SEPTEMBER 8, 2018 ANACONDA SMELTER SUPERFUND SITE VISIT

DATE PREPARED: 8/15/18

Objective: Visit the Anaconda Smelter Superfund Site to provide Administrator Wheeler a site tour and overview of the recently reached conceptual settlement framework that addresses final cleanup actions and significant benefits to the local community. The site is on the Superfund Administrator's Emphasis List and the upcoming milestone is to complete negotiations for implementation of remaining actions to address human health exposure.

Participants: Montana Governor's Office, Members of Montana Congressional Delegation, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Anaconda Deer Lodge County CEO and County Commissioners

Location: Anaconda, Montana

Site Background: The Anaconda Smelter Superfund Site was placed on the National Priorities List of Superfund Sites in 1983 to address contamination from former smelting operations. EPA is the lead agency with Atlantic Richfield Co. (AR) conducting site activities through administrative orders. The 300-square-mile Anaconda Smelter Site is located at the southern end of the Deer Lodge Valley in Montana. In 1884, Atlantic Richfield's predecessor started large copper concentrating and smelting operations at the site. Two separate smelters operated in Anaconda during this period: the Old Works operated from 1884 to 1901 and the Washoe Works operated across the valley from 1902 to 1980.

In 1977, Atlantic Richfield purchased the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, including the smelter. Operations at the Anaconda Smelter ceased in 1980 and the smelter facilities were dismantled soon thereafter. As a result of ore processing operations, wastes, soil, groundwater and surface water are contaminated with arsenic, copper, cadmium lead and zinc, which are hazardous substances under the Superfund law.

Cleanup Status:

Cleanup has been ongoing since the late 1980s, and over \$400 million has been spent on cleanup to date.

- Nearly 1000 residential and commercial properties have been cleaned up to date, with another 1000 to be completed in the next three-plus years.
- All domestic wells and/or water supplies have either been tested and/or remediated within the site. Wells will continue to be monitored.
- Over 10 million cubic yards of waste have been removed from the community and consolidated onto Atlantic Richfield property.
- Over 5000 acres (500 million cubic yards of waste) from the former smelter facility and disposal areas have been capped and revegetated.
- Nearly 1000 acres of new wetlands have been constructed and another 5000 acres protected.
- Over 12,000 acres of adjacent contaminated soils have been reclaimed and support wildlife & grazing lands.
- 140,000 feet of stormwater controls are in place to reduce the impact of contaminated sediments on streams.
- 30,000 feet of stream distance has been restored providing for a high-quality fishery.
- EPA will begin the process of delisting two operable units in FY19 (Mill Creek and Flue Dust Operable Units).

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Community Concerns/EPA Actions

- The community has expressed concerns about the protectiveness of the cleanup. Since cleanup of residential soils began in the 1990's new science has become available and EPA has re-evaluated the risk analysis and modified the cleanup remedy for lead and arsenic. In 2015 EPA directed ARCO to resample 2000 homes for lead, as well as all schools, parks and daycares. Sampling and cleanup will continue through 2022 and possibly beyond.
- In May 2018, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) along with local and state partners conducted a community listening session to understand the community's health concerns. In July 2018, ATSDR returned to the community to provide their findings and announce that an exposure investigation will be conducted.
- EPA, MDEQ, Atlantic Richfield, Anaconda Deer Lodge County and other stakeholders anticipate working with the community on future land use decisions for the site. Future community engagement may include public meetings, listening sessions and surveys.

Enforcement Update

- Multiple Consent Decree negotiations have occurred at the Anaconda Smelter Site over the years resulting in two Consent Decrees and numerous orders. The most recent negotiations began in 2015 and include the county. These negotiations were recently accelerated resulting in a conceptual settlement framework agreement that will be shared with the public for their input prior to final agreement.
- The parties hope to reach a final consent decree that would close out all issues at the Anaconda Smelter Site by spring 2019.